

## **IMPROVING STUDENTS' READING COMPREHENSION ON NARRATIVE TEXT THROUGH HERRINGBONE TECHNIQUE**

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**Abstract:** This study is intended to improve the students' reading comprehension on narrative text, especially detail information, main idea and vocabulary through Herringbone technique. Herringbone is the technique to help students find important information and main idea in a text by seeking answer six comprehension questions on a diagram. Method of the research is a Classroom Action Research which is conducted in three cycles. The subject of this research is eleventh grade students, numbering 34 students. The data is collected by using observation checklist, fieldnote, and test. The data is analyzed by describing the observation checklist and fieldnote, and by using formula of mean score. The results indicate the students' reading comprehension on narrative text improve in three cycles through Herringbone technique.

**Key words:** Reading Comprehension, Narrative Text, Herringbone Technique, and Classroom Action Research.

**Abstrak:** Penelitian ini dilaksanakan untuk meningkatkan kemampuan siswa dalam memahami teks naratif khususnya, informasi yang detail, ide pokok dan kosa kata dengan menggunakan teknik Herringbone. Herringbone teknik adalah sebuah teknik untuk membantu siswa menemukan informasi penting dan ide pokok didalam sebuah teks dengan menjawab enam pertanyaan pemahaman pada sebuah diagram. Penelitian ini adalah sebuah penelitian tindakan kelas dalam tiga siklus. Subjek dari penelitian ini adalah kelas XI IPS, yang berjumlah 34 orang. Data penelitian dikumpul dengan melalui ceklis observasi, catatan lapangan dan tes evaluasi. Data tersebut dianalisa dengan mendeskripsikan ceklis observasi, catatan lapangan dan menggunakan rumus mencari nilai rata-rata siswa. Hasil penelitian menunjukan kemampuan siswa memahami teks naratif meningkat dalam tiga siklus dengan menggunakan teknik Herringbone.

**Kata Kunci:** Pemahaman Membaca, Teks Naratif, Teknik Herringbone, dan Penelitian Tindakan Kelas.

Reading is an activity which has two aspects: they are pronouncing the words and comprehending the content of the source. Although two aspects exist in reading, the main point is to get the information from the source by having comprehending the content. By comprehending the content, someone can be claimed that he has done the process of reading. Besides that people will also get and understand information stated in the text. Ogle and Blachowicz (2008) stated that comprehension does not happen at one point; rather, it is a process that takes place over time. Comprehension is the process of deriving meaning from connected text (Pang, 2003). Furthermore, a reading text has different types, for example narrative, hortatory, explanation, analytical and many more.

Reading comprehension is an ability of reading that is being taught to senior high school level. Based on the recent curriculum of English subject, the learners in the level should be able to comprehend the meaning of short functional text and simple essay. In the simple essays the learners are expected to give respond on the meaning of the text. Besides that, the students should be able to explore their thinking and to identify what the author means. In other word, the students in this level are supposed to read and to understand the text comprehensively. Unfortunately, comprehending the English text for the students is not easy since it is a foreign language. Students need to make English reading as habit, so that they can get accustomed to the English text.

Nevertheless, regarding to the researcher observation during the teaching learning activity in SMA Negeri 01 Bunut Hilir and regarding to the researcher interview to the English teacher, the eleventh grade students got difficulties to comprehend a narrative text. Most of the students in the class could not answer the questions based on the text well. They limited vocabulary range, were hard to identify detailed information and main idea. When teacher asked them, they just kept silent. They just pronounced the text but did not understand what they have read well. Then, to help the students comprehend narrative text reading the researcher used Herringbone Technique to be implemented in the class.

Teaching reading narrative text of eleventh grade students is through herringbone technique. The herringbone technique is a technique that used to comprehend text, content or other sources. By using the technique, the learner can find detail information in the text by asking six comprehension questions; Who?, What?, When?, Where?, Why? and How? They are too can find the main idea by synthesizing.

Tierney et al. (1980) say that herringbone technique is a structured outlining procedure designed to help students organized important information.

Deegan (2006) says that Herringbone technique develops comprehension of the main idea by plotting the 5W+1H question on a visual diagram of a fish Skelton. Using the answer tow h question, the students can write main idea across the backbone of the fish diagram.

Zygouris & Glass (2004) say herringbone technique is using 5w+1h questions as guiding to help reader to find detailed information of the text then decide and identify the main idea.

Edwards (2003) mentioned some steps of Herringbone technique, the steps can be seen as follows:

1. Select reading material at the students level
2. Construct a herringbone outline with the 5W+H (Who? When? Where? Why? What? How?) and the main idea.
3. Students read, brainstorm and write important information about the story in their notebook.
4. After discussion, the students write answers on the Herringbone outline
5. Students discuss answers (5W+H+main idea)

The pattern of the herringbone creates framework for students to take notes and to sort of the information. After information has been gotten, then the students synthesize and summarize that information. The purpose is to make the students understand the whole information that will make the students were easy to identify the main idea which stated on the text.

There were four procedures while teaching the narrative text through the technique. For the first, the teacher explained definition of narrative text. Second, she asked the students to find the meaning of unfamiliar words in pre-reading, next step find the detail information by using the guided questions. The last, the students find or identify the main idea by synthesizing activity.

## **METHOD**

The method used in this research is classroom action research. Classroom action research usually focuses on seeking solution to problems of classroom management, instructional strategies, use of material, or student learning. Ferrance (2002) stated that classroom action research is undertaken in a school setting. It is a reflective process that is allowed for inquiry and discussion as components of the research. Action research is collaborative activity among colleagues that search the solution to solve real problem experienced or looking for ways to improve students' achievement.

A classroom action research consists of four stages. Kemmis and McTaggart in Anne Burn (2010) mention these four steps. The steps are the plan, the action, the observation, and the reflection. The following is the description of the four steps in each cycle.

### **1. Plan**

Before conducting the technique in acting stage, researcher investigated the real problems that happened in the class by doing pre-research and interviewing the English teacher. After knowing the problems, researcher prepared everything which would be needed in this research. The writer designed teaching material, instruments of collecting data (field note, observation checklist,

evaluation test), lesson plan, herringbone sheet (fish diagram) and reading material.

2. Action

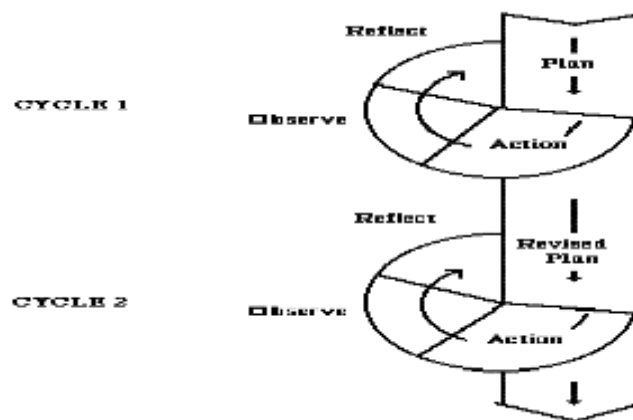
The action is the implementation of the plans that have been made. In this research, the writer acted as a collaborator and the English teacher of SMA Negeri 01 BunutHilir taught the students in reading narrative text using Herringbone technique. The teacher began with pre-reading activity stage by asking them to know the meaning of unfamiliar words. Then continue with the use of guided question stage to find the detail information. After that, continue with synthesizing activity stage to decide the main idea. Finally, the teacher gave the student test. Then, as the collaborator, the researcher took note and observed the teacher and the students' activities during the process of research.

3. The observation.

The observation is to see how the activity is running; and to gather the data as the information to be assessed. To collect the data, the researcher filled the field note and observation checklist. The researcher observed students' activity and teacher's activity during teaching learning process. Whether the students followed the teacher instruction or not, or whether the teacher done all the steps of the technique well

4. Reflection.

The reflection is the stage to reflect how the research has been carried out; from the planning to the observation stage. Reflection was the stage in which data collected in observation were analysed. In order to improve the teaching learning process, the researcher and teacher discussed the performance of the teacher in teaching learning process to find the strength and weakness from each cycle. To overcome the weakness, researcher and teacher discussed the plan and chose appropriate activity for next cycle.



**Figure 1. Cyclical Action Research model based on Kemmis and McTaggart (adapted from Anne Burns: 2010)**

The subject of this research was the eleventh grade students of SMA Negeri01 BunutHilir in the academic year 2013/2014. The research conducted in class XI social class that consisted of 34 students. There were 20 girls and 14 boys in the class.

In collecting the data, the researcher used Observation checklist and Measurement. Observation was the time when the researcher recorded behaviors, interactions or events that were occurring. The purpose was to observe the process in order to improve the result and repair the mistakes of the process. In measurement, the researcher measured the students reading through worksheet based on the narrative text given in every meeting.

The students' achievements in every cycle can be recognized from the improvement of score range taken from the result of scoring. The average score here is used to classify the qualification of the students' action in conducting the teaching reading comprehension through Herringbone technique. The formula is as follows:

$$M = \frac{\sum X}{N}$$

M = the average of students' score

$\sum X$  = the sum of total score

N = the number of students being observed

The tools of data collecting used in this research are observational checklist, field note and worksheet. Observation checklist was a list of things that was investigated by the researcher. This list had been prepared by the observer. There was a table of observation checklist that consisted of quotations which reflected what had been done or not in teaching learning process. The observation checklist was filled by the researcher. Then, field note is used to make a note about even that was unpredictable which occurred during the research and took concern of everything that happened in the class. Worksheet was used to take students reading score. Student's score was useful in data analysis. Therefore, researcher used essay test and multiple choice items. Then for documenting the process of classroom action research the researcher used camera.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### **Result**

In general, the Herringbone technique successfully improved students' reading comprehension in narrative text. The researcher decided to describe process of teaching and learning while the teacher was applying the herringbone technique and showed the result of the test as implemented on following explanation;

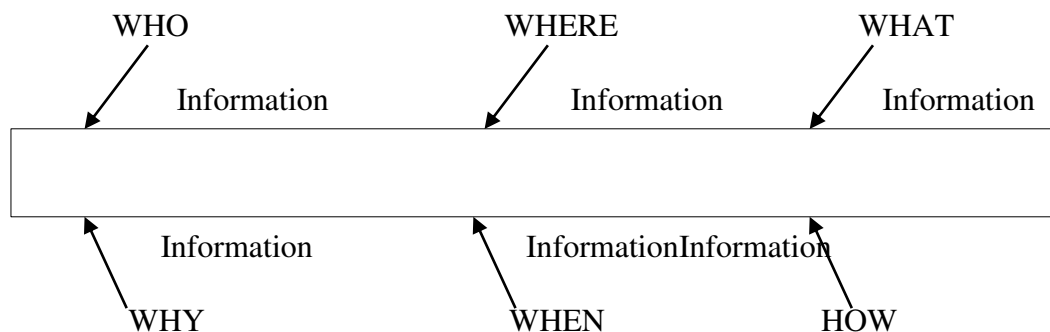
1. Pre-reading activity could improve students' ability to comprehend the vocabulary of narrative text.

The activity done by the students before they read the text in detail was comprehended the vocabulary. To improve students' vocabulary, the writer arranged some strategies before they read and found the detail information on the text. Those strategies were put in pre-reading. The strategies were let's find the

meaning of underlined unfamiliar words and “let’s find the similar and opposite meaning from these underlined words”.

2. The using of six comprehension question of Herringbone technique could improve students’ ability to comprehend the information on narrative text reading.

Six comprehension questions of Herringbone are guided question to help the students finding the detail information on the narrative text such as setting, plot complication, and resolution. The following are the guided questions on Herringbone diagram;



**Figure 2. Six Comprehension Questions of Herringbone Technique**



Who	This guided question used to find the participants in the story (characters)
Where	This guided question used to find the place where the participant of the story lived.
What	This guided question used to help the students predicting the conflict of the story or to mention the problems happened in the story.
Why	This guided question used to find the reason why conflict in the story happened. This question guided the students to find indication why the problem rose. (Complication)

✿ How

This guided question used to know the ending of the story. It was happy ending or sad ending (Resolution).

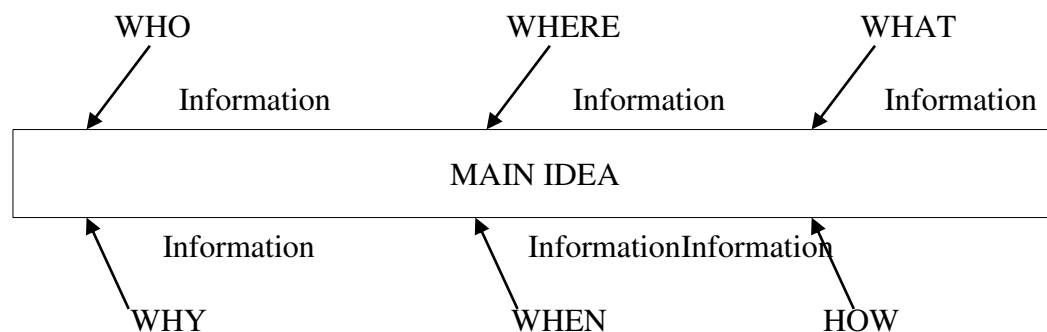
✿ When

This guided question was used to know when the participants find the solution (Resolution)

\*The purpose of this question can be changed based on the need.

3. Synthesizing activity of Herringbone technique could improve students' ability to comprehend the main idea of narrative text reading.

To find the main idea, teacher used synthesizing activity. Synthesizing was the last step of herringbone technique procedures. The purpose of the activity was to help the students finding the main idea that can be seen in the following diagram:



**Figure 3. Synthesizing Activity of Herringbone Technique**

There were some steps should be done by the students when they would find the main idea. First, they had to finish the last activity where the students should answer the guided question completely. Second, after all questions were answered. Next, the students started to synthesize and summarize the information that they had already found. The result of synthesizing activity is to be the main idea which it should be written on the backbone of herringbone diagram above.

The students reading comprehension improved in three cycles. The students' means score in first cycle was 63, in second cycle was 76, and in the third cycle the students means score was 33. They had shown gradually improvement in each cycle for vocabulary, detail information and main idea which can be seen as below:

**Table 1. The Improvement of Students' Ability in Comprehending Vocabulary**

<b>Students' achievement.</b>		
<b>1<sup>st</sup> cycle</b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> cycle</b>	<b>3<sup>rd</sup> cycle</b>
<b>31</b> <b>(61%)</b>	<b>34</b> <b>(70%)</b>	<b>39</b> <b>(79%)</b>

**Table 2. The Improvement of Students' ability in Comprehending the Detail Information**

<b>Students' achievement.</b>		
<b>1<sup>st</sup> cycle</b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> cycle</b>	<b>3<sup>rd</sup> cycle</b>
<b>26</b> <b>(65%)</b>	<b>32</b> <b>(81%)</b>	<b>35</b> <b>(88%)</b>

**Table 3. The Improvement of Students' Ability in Comprehending the Main Idea**

<b>Students' achievement.</b>		
<b>1<sup>st</sup> cycle</b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> cycle</b>	<b>3<sup>rd</sup> cycle</b>
<b>5</b> <b>(61%)</b>	<b>8</b> <b>(80%)</b>	<b>9</b> <b>(97%)</b>

## **DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION**

### **Discussion**

This research is a Classroom Action Research. The writer used this method because the writer believes it is able to help the students of eleventh grade students of SMAN 01 BunutHilir, for the problems they have been faced. The problems were the difficulty in finding the detail information of narrative text, identify the main idea and lack of vocabulary. Therefore, the writer tried to solve these problems by applying a teaching technique, namely Herringbone technique. The writer analyzed the data based on the result of the data analysis which was gathered from the observation checklists, field notes, and the score of students' tests.

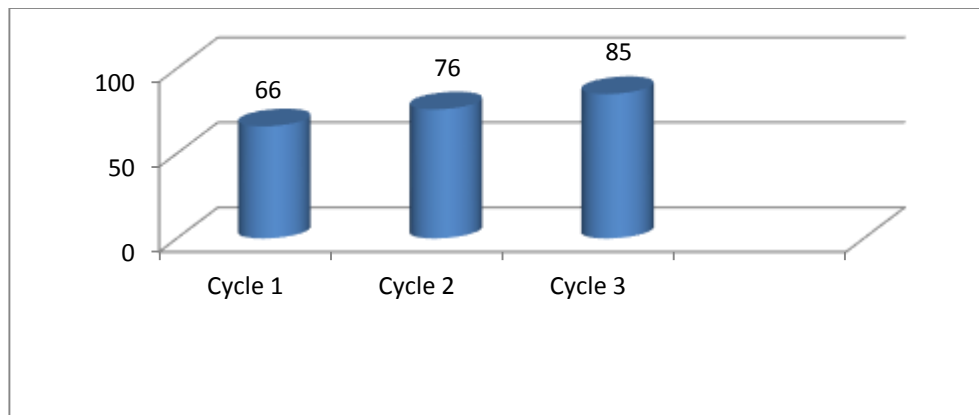
Herringbone Technique was considered successful in this research. It was shown by the improvement of the students' performance from the first cycle to the third cycle, as well as their score in each test and achievement in each item. As mentioned in the previous part, the writer has done three cycles. The mean score of students' achievement on detail information of first to last cycle was gradually



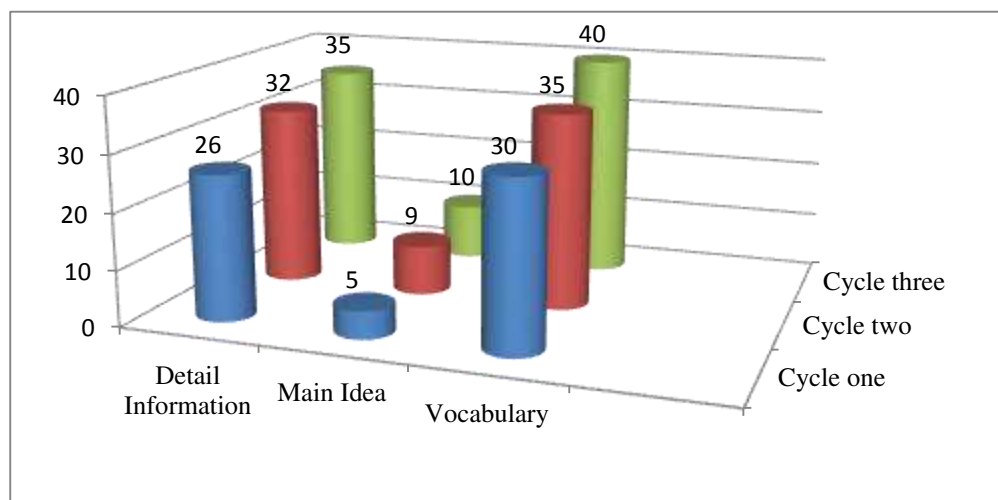
improved. It can be concluded that teaching reading comprehension on narrative text by using Herringbone technique was successfully helped the eleventh grade students of SMA Negeri 01 BunutHilir.

From the description above, it showed that encouraging students to read the narrative text through Herringbone technique was able to improve students' ability in reading narrative text in which the students could understand the text comprehensively. In addition, this technique also helped the students to enlarge their vocabulary by exploring the text before they read, to find the detail information by using guided question (six comprehension question), and helped the students to identify the main idea by synthesizing activity.

The improvement of students' achievement in each cycle can be seen as follows:



**Graphics 1: The Mean Score of Students' Achievement**



**Graphics 2: The Mean Score of Aspects of Reading Comprehension.**

The explanation and description of the improvements above, led the writer assumed that the Classroom Action Research could be only conducted in three cycles because there happened significant improvements from the first cycle to the third cycle. By using Herringbone technique, the students could comprehend the narrative text better than without using this technique. The improvements were the evidences that this technique had successfully helped the students in comprehending detail information, main idea and vocabulary.

### **Conclusion**

Based on the research findings, it can be conclude that students' ability in reading narrative text for the eleventh grade students of SMAN 01 BunutHilir improved after being taught through Herringbone technique in three cycles.

The research showed that the use of Herringbone technique in teaching narrative text could improve students' reading comprehension from cycle to cycle. This technique did not only improve students' reading comprehension on narrative text, but also improved students' participation and motivation in learning. Before applying this technique, only few students participated in teaching learning process actively. But, by using this technique, the students were encouraged to share opinion, rouse up their hand to answer questions. The students' reading competence improved from the first cycle to the third cycle. It was shown by the improvement of the students' score and all of the aspects in the goals of teaching learning process that have been conducted by the teacher and collaborator had been fulfilled. This technique did not only improve the students' comprehension on narrative text, but also built students' diligence in learning, and also be responsible in learning.

### **SUGGESTION**

Related to the explanation on the finding and discussion, it can be concluded Herringbone Technique has improved the students' reading comprehension on narrative text on the Eleventh grade student of SMA Negeri 01BunutHilir in academic year 2013/2014. The improvements are related to both the activeness of process in the classroom and the students' achievement on the test. Finally, the researcher hopes the result of this research can be a reference for the English teacher to enhance their techniques in teaching, in order to help their students comprehend the text, especially narrative text.

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